

Prairie dunks Wash for fast 4-1 getaway

Written by Tom Fruehling

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And the Lord said Moses will lead them out of the wilderness to the Promised Land.

Everyone in the packed and raucous student section of the Cedar Rapids Prairie gym Friday night was decked out in brand-spanking-new bright school color shirts emblazoned with "The Orange Sea."

"You know," explained athletic director Rocky Bennett, "as in Moses parted the Red Sea."

Prairie Coach James Moses is, indeed, doing some marvelous things with his young team, guiding them to a 4-1 start in the wake of a 63-35 tidal wave over Cedar Rapids Washington Friday.

The Hawks won only three games all of last year.

"We're coming around and coming together," the second-year head coach said after the onslaught. "I told the kids that they're making their own history. We're embarking into new territory."

It was a mismatch from the word go against an inexperienced Warrior bunch that hardly knew what hit them. Using a pressing defense, Prairie stole the ball five times in the opening five minutes and practically ran Washington out of the gym with fast-break layups.

Warrior Coach Brad Metzger tried to stem the tide by inserting a whole new lineup, but the hustling Hawks raced to a 24-11 lead midway through the second quarter. Washington went a full six minutes without scoring.

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"They pressured us hard early, and we made some mistakes," said Metzger, whose team is 0-3. "From then on, we were playing catch-up."

The Orange Sea went wild when senior sparkplug Jacob Aune drained a 3-pointer at the buzzer to extend the Prairie halftime margin to 35-19.

With three minutes gone after intermission, however, Aune took a hard fall under the basket and lay motionless on his back for more than 30 minutes as trainers and then paramedics attended to him. He was taken by ambulance to the hospital for observation, but Moses said he didn't think Aune suffered a serious injury.

"He hit his head on the floor and sort of wrenched his back," the coach said. "He was kind of woozy. But he's a tough kid."

Aune left the game with a team-high 16 points. His teammates hardly slowed down after the long delay, though, running their lead to 52-27 after three quarters. Before it was over, everybody on both benches saw action.

"I think we won the game in the first five minutes," said Prairie gunslinger Matt MacDougall, who hit five sweet jumpers and a pair of free throws for 12 points. "We put ball pressure on them and they turned the ball over. We didn't want them to get settled down."

Floor general Jace Hanna, who was all over the court on defense, said the game plan worked to perfection. "We wanted to force turnovers and play up-tempo. And we wanted to take care of the ball, which we did pretty well."

Hanna, on the varsity since his freshman year but sidelined by injury last season, said the Hawks' quick start is not a surprise.

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"This team is so much different in every aspect. We have good chemistry and a passion for the game. And our fans are great," he said. "They give us a lot of energy."

As for the coach, he takes the long view.

"It's nice to see them play with more confidence and know their hard work is paying off," said Moses. "We're still growing. We're just laying down the seeds and taking proper care of them. And we'll let Mother Nature take her course."

Jason Oney led Washington with 10 points.

WASHINGTON (35): David Tann 2 0-0 4, Austin Bergstrom 0 1-2 1, Cybryan Moa 1 0-0 2, Jason Oney 3 3-4 10, Paul Nash 2 0-0 6, Montaves Anderson 1 0-0 2, Brock Butterfield 0 0-0 0, Peter Holmes 0 3-4 3, David Rosenthal 1 0-0 2, Heath Clark 0 0-0 0, Sam Bil 0 0-2 0, Jacob Kramer 0 0-0 0, Sean Bredl 1 0-1 2, Zachary Williams 1 0-1 3, Noah Burdt 0 0-0 0. Totals 12 7-14 35.

PRAIRIE (63): Jacob Aune 7 0-0 16, Brooks Kehoe 3 0-0 7, Jace Hanna 2 4-4 8, Matt MacDougall 5 2-2 12, Thomas Eilers 0 0-0 0, Tyler Mouglin 1 0-0 3, Cody Tonyan 0 0-0 0, DeMetrius Harper 2 1-2 5, Kentrel Smith 2 2-2 6, Garrett Rasmussen 0 1-2 1, Bryce Meeker 1 1-2 3, Mitchell Adams 1 0-0 2, William Fritz 0 0-0 0, Vaughn Koch 0 0-0 0, Zachary Brunscheen 0 0-0 0. Totals 24 11-14 63.

Halftime - Prairie 35, Washington 19. 3-point goals - Washington 4 (Nash 2, Williams, Oney), Prairie 4 (Aune 2, Mouglin, Kehoe).